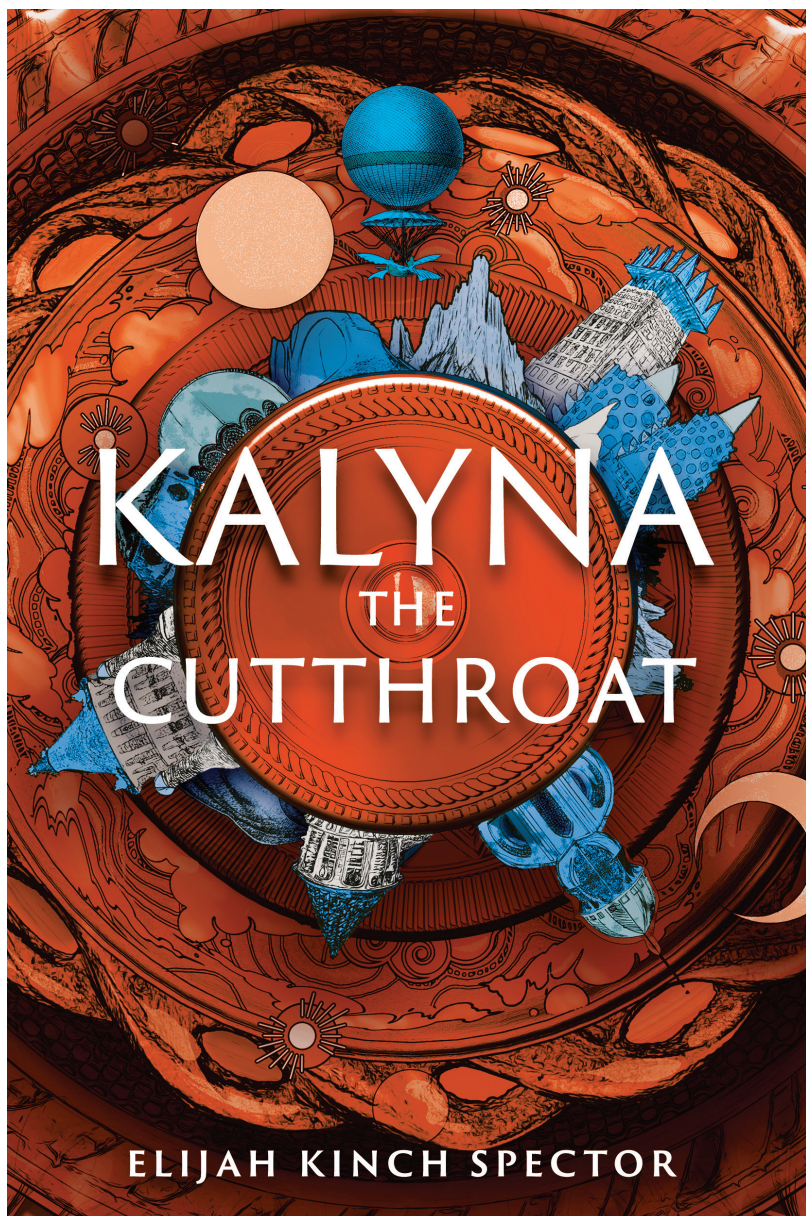


Reading Guide



EREWHON



★ About the Author ★



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ELIJAH KINCH SPECTOR


is a writer, a dandy, and a rootless cosmopolitan from the Bay Area who now lives in Brooklyn. He is a British Fantasy Award finalist for his first novel, *Kalyana the Soothsayer*, which received acclaim from NPR, *Nerds of a Feather*, *Reactor*, *Foreword*, and *Paste Magazine*, among others.



★ Book Discussion Questions ★


These suggested questions are to spark conversation and enhance your reading of *Kalyna the Cutthroat*.

1. Who do you consider to be the main character of this book, Kalyna or Radiant? How would both of those characters answer this question?
2. How does Radiant feel about Kalyna at their first meeting? What does he think of her? And how does that change by the end of the book? How do you feel about Kalyna?
3. Dagmar is the first to describe Kalyna as a “cutthroat”; do you agree? Why do you think the author chose the title *Kalyna the Cutthroat*?
4. This novel explores a lot of moral ambiguities. How do Radiant, Kalyna, and Dagmar each navigate the different ethical dilemmas they face?
5. For much of the book, Kalyna is reluctant to take on a heroic or leadership role, feeling that she had “done enough” for the Tetrarchia already. Do you think she had a duty to keep helping people? How do you balance your wants and desires with



the needs of your community? Who do you feel you have a responsibility to?

6. Kalyna and Radiant are very different characters and narrators. What aspects of their characters impact the way they tell their stories? Are they equally truthful? How do you know?
7. Why do you think Radiant is interested in curses, of all the topics he could have studied? What different types of curses are present in the lives of the characters? In the histories of Loasht and the Tetrarchia?
8. The book blends dark themes with moments of humor. How did the humor impact your reading experience? How do the different characters use humor to cope with their predicaments?
9. How do the cultural and political tensions in the novel reflect or diverge from real-world historical or contemporary issues? What parallels did you notice?
10. Consider parallels in the relationship between Dagmar and Kalyna and the relationship between Radiant and Aloe. How do these different characters handle unrequited feelings of love or friendship? Who is honest in their feelings, and when? Which of the characters did you relate to the most?

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11. Are the protagonists' actions at the climax of the book morally defensible? What would you have done in their place?
 12. What do you think will become of the various communities explored in the book (the Lanreas River Guild, Loasht, the Tetrarchia)? What unforeseen consequences might Kalyna and Radiant's actions bring about in the future?

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